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THE WHITE HOUSE

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT
AT THE
NORTH PARK SHOPPING CENTER

8:10 P.M. CDT

Ray Nasher, Mrs. Nasher, my good friend Senator John Tower, your fine Mayor Bob Folsom, "Miss Texas" Mary Ellen Richardson, ladies and gentlemen:

I am honored and privileged to be here in the North Park Mall and to have an opportunity to speak directly to so many of you from the great City of Dallas.

But, before we go any further, as a former football player a good many years ago, I know how much a winning team depends on a great coach, and here in Dallas you have one of the greatest coaches in the history of football. You all know who I am talking about -- Tom Landry of the Dallas Cowboys.

Yesterday, Tom Landry announced his support for my campaign and all I can say to Tom is, with his help and the help of many, many more concerned Texans like him, we are going to win on Saturday, May 1.

But we are not only going to win on Saturday, May 1, here in Texas. We are going to win in Kansas City, we are going to win November 2, and go right on winning for America for the next century.

When I became President about 21 months ago, our great country, the United States of America, was faced with some very serious concerns -- runaway inflation and a recession, both, threatened our economic strength and the stability of America; international tensions threatened the peace in many, many areas of the world; a crisis of confidence in our own Government and in the basic institutions of our society threatened the promise of a 200-year American experience. It was a bleak, depressing picture. It was a time that called for strong, affirmative action.

Twenty-one months later, the results are there for all Americans to take pride in and for all the world to note. Our national economy in the United States is growing stronger and stronger, more prosperous and more prosperous every day. Both the business community and your own family can plan ahead with a new found certainty and a new found security. The economic indicators are pointing day after day after day to better and better news as far as this country is concerned.

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Almost every segment of our society, of our economy is rebounding in a strong, dynamic, encouraging way. We are on the road to a new prosperity in America and we are not going to be sidetracked now by anybody, period.

Let me point out a few of the facts and factors that make this country strong and our future great. Employment has gone up. 86,700,000 Americans are working today, and that means more Americans are gainfully employed right now than ever before in the history of the United States. It also means that we have gained over 2,600,000 jobs in the last 12 months, and this is progress by any standard.

Unemployment, it is going down -- not as fast as I would like but it is moving again in the right direction, and I am not going to let up in fighting this unemployment problem until every American who wants a job can find a job. That is what we want.

During 1974, inflation was raging at an annual rate of more than 12 percent. But the Department of Commerce -- and this is the best news we have gotten -- announced just last week that the Consumer Price Index rose at an annual rate for the first three months of 1976 at the lowest rate in four years -- less than 3 percent.

We have cut the rate of inflation in the last 20 months 75 percent, and that is progress, and we are going to make some more.

But what is more encouraging is that the Consumer Price Index -- how you and your family and your neighbors look at the future -- is double that of a year ago. Real earnings for the average American worker have risen significantly, well above the rate of inflation, and that means that your purchasing power is on the increase.

We have achieved this economic recovery through the common sense steps that I initiated at the outset of the recession -- tax cuts for individuals, tax incentives for business expansion and job production, and extended income cushions for those unfortunate Americans that were out of work. The price of America's economic recovery was not a new round of double-digit inflation, it was not another frustrating experience with wage and price controls, nor was it billions and billions and billions of extra dollars from the Federal taxpayers.

I think you know where I stand on the question of unnecessary Federal spending. As Senator Tower knows, I vetoed 48 bills since becoming President -- and I want you to listen to this because it is very critical: In 20 months I vetoed 48 bills sent to me by an irresponsible Congress, and I vetoed those bills because I knew they were wrong, and the Congress of the United States has sustained 39 out of those 48 bills that I vetoed and the net result -- and this is what is meaningful to all of you -- we have saved \$13 billion by those vetoes.

Let me add a postscript, if I might. I will continue to veto those extravagant spending bills again and again and again and again.

As I look around this wonderful audience and see husbands and wives and wonderful citizens from the great City of Dallas, I know that each and every one of you has to keep your own financial house in order. You have every right to expect that the Congress of the United States will do exactly the same thing with the Federal Government, and if they don't, you know what to do November 2.

Now, if we can hold the line on Federal spending, if we can keep the budget busters in the Congress under control, let me make you a promise, a promise that I will keep during the next four years. If we can keep the budget busters in Congress under control, with your help we will give you another major tax decrease within the next two years.

In order for us to have the kind of economy that we want, I think we have to get tax reduction, we have to have a holddown on the rate of growth of Federal spending. What does this mean? It means more jobs for more Americans and I want those jobs to be in the private sector where you who work have a permanency, an incentive, and we all know that five out of six jobs in this country are in the private sector.

Those kinds of jobs give you a pride with the paycheck. We want a sustained economy in America, not only a goal for each of you, but a goal for this country.

But, economic progress is not the only progress that we have made. Today, America is at peace. Today, there are no Americans fighting in anyplace in the world. whatsoever, and I will keep it that way.

I believe firmly in peace through strength. We will stand tall and strong and keep our powder dry so the United States can negotiate from a position that commands respect and invites cooperation from our adversaries.

I have taken firm, firm steps to insure that our alliances are strong, our commitments are worthwhile and our defenses are without equal. I have proposed the two largest defense budgets in the history of the United States, reversing a trend that was reducing our defense expenditures year by year to levels that were dangerously low.

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The price of our national defense may be high but let me speak very personally to each and every one of you. The price of freedom is one Americans have always been willing to pay in blood, in sacrifice and in treasure. We are no less willing to pay that price in America today to keep our nation secure.

But America's security rests more than on armaments alone. Our ultimate strength is the spirit, the love of freedom, the pursuit of justice, the commitment to progress which Americans have shared for 200 years.

We live in a nation that is the envy of the world and frankly, I am darned sick and tired of hearing from some people that America is on the downgrade. It isn't true. I believe in America, as you do. I believe in its strength, as you do. I believe in its purpose, as you do. I believe in its goodness, as you do. Most of all, we believe in what we stand for. We can be proud, we can be proud that we are Americans and we are proud of America.

Working together, you and I, we can look to an even brighter future for our children and their children. We can see an America in which all men and women live in dignity, in security, in harmony and in peace. We can see people taking pride in their work, and finding pleasure and purpose in their lives.

We can see an America in which Government is the capable servant, not the master of its people. We can see an America which cherishes those wonderful old values of honesty, compassion, determination and courage. We can see an America in which those great dreams that we have all had will come true.

That is my goal. That is why I am asking for your support in the challenging years ahead so that I may have an opportunity to serve each and every one of you with strength, with support, with dignity and success.

I thank you very, very much.

END (AT 8:24 P.M. CDT)